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The Will

James P.

Gann

July 13th 184

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THE WILL.

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE PHILADELPHIA THEATRE.

BY FREDERIC REYNOLDS.

PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY THOMAS H. PALMER.

1822.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	PHILADELPHIA.
Sir Solomon Cynic	Mr. *Warn.*
Mandeville	*Hughe.*
Howard	*Wood.*
Veritas	*Barreti*
Realize	*Francis*
Robert	*Harris.*
Old Copsley	*Hathwell*
Servants to Sir Solomon	*Durang, &c*
Albina Mandeville	Mrs. *Wood.*
Mrs. Rigid	*Simpson.*
Cicely Copsley	*Jefferson.*
Deborah	*Francis.*

SCENE—Devonshire.

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THE WILL.

ACT I.

SCENE I—*the gate of Mandeville Castle, and view of surrounding country.*

enter MANDEVILLE *and* ROBERT.

Rob. Joy! I give you joy, sir! Once more welcome to Mandeville Castle! Look, sir, there stands the old pile, just as we left it fourteen years ago. Shall I knock at the gate?

Mand. Lose not a moment. (*Robert knocks*) I have travelled far to have the mystery unravelled; and till I know why I have been thus treated—why for three tedious years I have received no letter from my father—no tidings of my child—the interval is insupportable!

Rob. Pretty treatment, indeed, sir;—to bring two gentlemen from India—all the way from the shores of Bengal to the coast of Devonshire—only to get an answer to our letters!

Mand. Didn't I write by every packet?—regularly remit half my pay for the support of my daughter?—and to receive no answer!—to hear nothing from my father, or Mrs. Rigid, the governess of my child! What, what can be the motive for their silence? In India I have been

guilty of no vices, no extravagance; and if before I went, I involved myself in pecuniary embarrassments, was it not to serve a friend?

Rob. It was, sir. You became security for the ungrateful Mr. Howard; and because he took it into his head to die, and leave you responsible for twenty thousand pounds—

Mand. We were compelled to fly to India. Well, well, blame not Howard; if he had lived he would have proved himself deserving of my friendship. But now, Robert, I am here once more in the centre of my creditors; and if my father has forgotten me—knock again, the suspense is dreadful.

Rob. (*knocks*) Surely they are all run away, or drowned, or hanged—hanged! I beg pardon, sir; I only allude to the female part of the family, and I dare say many a fair neck has been twisted in consequence of my absence. Not come yet! Nay, don't fret so, sir; the worst come to the worst, we can but make the same exit we did this time fourteen years.

Mand. How?

Rob. Can't you remember our stealing out of those gates in disguise? our being found out by the bailiffs, and dodging them so artfully from place to place, that by the time they had taken out a writ in one county, we were safely perched in another; till at last, after having outwitted half the sheriffs'-officers and attorneys in England, we secured our retreat by arriving at Portsmouth late on a Saturday night, and sailing for India early on Sunday morning. Ha! ha! ha! I shall never forget the captain's smoking us, and after dinner giving for a toast, "Success to the Sunday men."

Mand. Hush! who comes here? Old Realize, my father's steward! Now we shall get information. Observe.

enter REALIZE *and* COPSLEY.

Real. Don't talk to me, you old poacher; Hav'n't you been repeatedly warned off Sir Solomon's manor, and didn't he himself see you kill the hare on his ground? And therefore, at Sir Solomon's request, I dismiss you from being game-keeper to the Mandeville manors.

Cops. Consider, consider, Mr. Realize, I am an old servant, and am as innocent of poaching—

Real. You were caught in the fact, and therefore I dismiss you, and appoint in your place—

(*Robert comes up to him.*)

Rob. Me, Mr. Steward! honest Bob Tickwell! How are you, my old friend? how are you? Here we are, you see—hot from Bengal!

Real. Why, it can't be!—Yes, it is! The long look'd-for come at last! Huzza!

Mand. Realize, I am glad to see you.

Real. So am I to see you; and so will sir Solomon; and so will all the neighbours.

Rob. There! I said so! I knew we should have a joyous welcome! Come! open wide the castle gates, and prepare the wine, the venison—

Real. Open wide the prison gates, and prepare the bread and water!—Mr. Mandeville, (*to Mand.*) sir, I'll trouble you for that two hundred pounds you owe me!

Rob. Psha! this isn't a proper time—

Real. Where is my money, sir?

Rob. Nonsense! His father will satisfy you! Come! we'll all pay the old gentleman a visit together. (*laying hold of Realize's arm*)

Real. Softly, master Robert; you may both go to the old gentleman as soon as you like; but, for me, I don't intend to pay him a visit these twenty years.

Mand. No! why where is he?

Real. Where, I can't exactly say, only I fancy you are about as far from him now as when you were hot in Bengal.

Mand. What, is he gone abroad?

Real. No; he's gone home;—he's dead—defunct,—was buried twelve months ago.

Mand. Dead! my father dead! I didn't expect this. (*putting his handkerchief to his eyes*)

Rob. No more did I, sir.—Oh! h! h! (*weeping violently*)

Real. Why, what's the milksop crying at?

Rob. I'm crying to think what trouble old Mr. Mandeville's death will occasion to my poor master; what a fatigue it will be to collect in all the rents, to pay his debts, to discharge you, and appoint me steward in your place, Oh! h! h!

Real. Indeed! if that's all that afflicts you, dry up your tears, booby; your master is disinherited.

Rob. Disinherited!

Real. Cut off with a shilling. Mr. Mandeville has left his whole estate to a woman

Rob. A woman! O, the old profligate!

Real. To your child, sir, (*to Mandeville*) to his own grand-daughter.

Mand. To Albina!

Rob. Bravo! then it comes to the same point: my master of course manages the property, and I'm steward still.

Real. There you're out again. I rather think Mrs. Rigid will manage the property. I rather imagine the young heiress will be ruled by the old governess; and as you have been no friend to her, Mr. Mandeville—

Mand. No friend to her! How?

Real. Nay, perhaps you may call it friendship to leave her to support your daughter at her own expense; perhaps you may call it friendship not to write any letters, or remit any money for three years together.

Mand. Go on, sir; let me know all.

Real. Why then you may know, that Mrs. Rigid informed the late Mr. Mandeville of your unfatherlike conduct; that he invited her and his grand-daughter to his house, and taking a fancy to Miss Albina, he made her his heiress. There—now you've heard the whole story; and I shall call it friendship if you'll pay me my two hundred pounds.

Mand. Not write letters! not remit money! hear me, sir.

Real. Not now. The heiress is expected from Dover every moment, and I must go and prepare the castle for her reception. Come along, poacher; come and deliver your keys to your successor—I'll take out a writ directly, and he sha'n't slip through my fingers a second time—(*aside*) No more disguises, Mr. Mandeville; no more Sunday-men, Mr. steward. Oh, what trouble will the old gentleman's death occasion to my poor master! (*mimicking Robert, and exit with Copsley at the castle gate*)

Rob. Now all's out, sir. No wonder at our not receiving answers, when they say we sent

no letters. Oh that diabolical governess! I always said you were to blame, to place your only child under her care; particularly when you knew she was once in love with you, and you refused her, and married her cousin, Miss Herbert.

Mand. Oh, name not her! If my Amelia had survived, I should not have been doomed unheard. What? deserted! disinherited! Is this my welcome home? Am I to find a father dead, and dying full of resentment against me? a daughter prejudiced! nay, perhaps cursing my very name, and this governess—speak, sir, justify your injured master.

Rob. I will with my life, sir; but don't be satisfied with Realize's story: let us get information elsewhere. Yonder is the house of Sir Solomon Cynic. If the old gentleman hasn't fretted away his life by railing at the follies of womankind, perhaps he lives to console and befriend you. Shall we go to him, sir?

Mand. Take me where you will. (*going, stops*) Robert, how old was Albina when we last saw her?

Reb. About four years, sir.

Mand. And I left her in the fond hope, that I might one day find in her a recompense for the loss of her mother. And now if I behold her, she will avoid, upbraid me! That thought is past all bearing. I'll know the worst, and then my fate's decided. They may desert, but they shall not despise me. [*exeunt*

SCENE II—*an apartment in Sir Solomon's house.*

enter SIR SOLOMON, *followed by* CICELY.

Sir Sol. I tell you it's in vain; your applica-

tion's useless—you are useless—your whole sex is useless.

Cic. Nay, Sir Solomon—

Sir Sol. I tell you, women are of no use—none, but to nurse children, mend linen, make puddings, and beat their husbands.

Cic. But consider, your honour, the hare was killed by accident, not by design; the dogs chased it into your grounds; and I hope Mr. Realize won't dismiss my poor father—

Sir Sol. Keep off, keep within your magic circle; I haven't been within the reach of a woman these twenty years; and you are the very last I'd suffer to come near me. I have often observed you in my walks, often noted your mischievous smiles, your penetrating eyes, and I don't like them—I say I don't like them—so keep your distance. I won't be made a fool of a second time.

Cic. A second time, sir Solomon!

Sir Sol. Ay; I was once as much in love as Mark Antony, and like him I was deserted by my Cleopatra. His queen chose a mighty conqueror to be false with; but my Susannah, my fantastic Susannah, fixed her affections on a dancing-master, a caperer, and ever since I have had such a contempt for the sex—(*Cicely lays hold of his hand*)—Holloa! you touched me! I feel the shock, I'm electrified, I'm—What sweet lips the gipsey has!

Cic. If you would only pay a visit to our cottage, and be eye-witness to the distress you will occasion! Your nephew, Mr. Howard, has often been there; and if you would come and imitate his charitable conduct, I and my sisters would be so grateful—(*still keeping hold of his hand*)

Sir Sol. Your sisters! pooh! nonsense! what should I do amongst a parcel of young giddy romping—hark'ye, are all your sisters as handsome as yourself?

Cic. Handsome! how you flatter, Sir Solomon!

Sir Sol. I don't: you're the most lovely, most bewitching—Susannah was a dowdy to you. Look here, now, look at the omnipotence of love! a man is never secure from its influence; and if he lives independent of the sex till he is so old and decrepid that he cannot stir from his bed, yet then, even then, he may fall a victim to its power.

Cic. 'Tis Mr. Howard; now I'll ask him to intercede for me.

Sir Sol. Howard? so it is, and somebody with him: go, don't let us be seen together—I'll come to the cottage soon after sun-set; and if the hare was really killed by accident—hush! begone, no caressing, we'll reserve all that for by and by—(*Cicely exit*) So, I have once more the true Mark Antony feel.

enter MANDEVILLE *and* HOWARD.

Sir Sol. Hark'ye, George, don't let me hear of your paying any more visits at the gamekeeper's cottage; if I do, a certain young lady shall know of your inconstancy, your—(*sees Mand.*) Ha! who's that?

How. A stranger, sir, that—

Sir Sol. Stranger! why it's Mandeville! that profligate Mandeville! What brought you from India, sir? and, after what has passed, how dare you show your face in my house?

Mand. How ! you against me too ! what have I done ?

Sir Sol. What have you not done, sir ? Hav'n't you deserted your own child ? hav'n't you left the governess to maintain her at her own expense ?

Mand. 'Tis false : on my life 'tis false ! I wrote letter after letter, made repeated remittances ; till receiving no answer, and unable to endure such torturing suspense, I came at all hazards to England, to know why I was so harshly treated.

Sir Sol. And now you know that your father has made Albina his heiress, that she is shortly to be married to Mr. Veritas, to this gentleman's tutor, sir ; and you may also know, that I expect you instantly to discharge the late Mr. Howard's debt for twelve hundred pounds.

How. Mr. Howard's debt ! my father's ?

Sir Sol. Yes, sir ; Mr. Mandeville was his surety. I have his bond ; and had he behaved as he ought, I'd have died rather than have asked him for it ; but now—

enter a Servant in livery.

Serv. Sir, Miss Albina and her governess are this moment arrived at the castle.

Sir Sol. Are they ? I'll wait upon them directly. Mr. Mandeville, don't expect to see your daughter : for, till she is married to the tutor, Mrs. Rigid means to seclude her from all society : and for you, George Howard, you must not associate with a man of his character. Though your father behaved ill to him, remember you are not responsible for his ingratitude.

Now for the castle, next for the cottage, and then "All for love, or the World well lost." [*exit*.

Mand. Then all's confirmed, and I've no hope, no friend! What's to be done? whither shall I go? where fly? who will receive so lost a wretch as I am? Pursued by enemies, abandoned by a father, forsaken by my child! who will, who dare befriend me?

How. I will.

Mand. You!

How. You have forgot me, Mr. Mandeville, I see you have. You don't recollect George Howard, whom when a boy you used to take such notice of; I'm strangely altered since you went to India, that is, in person only, I hope; for in mind and disposition I am still the same.

Mand. Are you?

How. Oh, Mr. Mandeville; I don't know why, whether it is from the joy at seeing you, or from the grief I feel at the cruel treatment you've received, I don't know which it is, but I'm going to be the same blubbering boy you left me.

Mand. Indeed! 'Sdeath, this generosity afflicts me more than all their cruelty. Let me go; I heard your uncle's orders—"you must not associate with a man of his character." Let me begone. I will not involve you.

How. Not involve me! Didn't my father involve you? and if I've not the fortune to repay the obligation, I'll prove I have the gratitude to remember it. From this hour I am devoted to your service: and if the friendship of the son can atone for the injuries of the parent, I shall be far happier in partaking your distresses than in sharing my unfeeling uncle's riches.

Mand. I am most grateful; but I cannot consent—

How. You must, you shall consent: come, come, your case is not so lost as you imagine. The governess isn't the only person who has an influence over your daughter; there is another—

Mand. Who? this tutor?

How. No; his pupil. I flatter myself Albina has no slight partiality for her father's friend.

Mand. For you! how, and where did you know her?

How. I'll tell you. When I and my tutor arrived from the grand tour, we found Albina and the governess at Dover. Mr. Veritas and Mrs. Rigid being related, we often paid them visits; and while the schoolmaster and schoolmistress moralised on the miseries of the world, their two scholars as naturally conversed on its pleasures. In short, we soon laughed ourselves into an attachment; which the governess perceiving, Albina was locked up, I turned out, and the tutor destined for her husband.

Mand. Indeed! And did she—forgive my weakness, sir—did she once name her father?

How. Often; but the governess has instilled into her young mind such notions of your barbarity, and at the same time of her own benevolence, that she looks on her as a parent, you as an enemy. However, don't despair; if we can once gain an interview—and what say you? Shall we go to the castle directly?

Mand. 'Twill be in vain. The gates will be shut against us.

How. Never mind; we'll force them open. Come.

Mand. Nay, but consider you are dependent on your uncle.

How. No matter. The hope that the name of Howard may still be dear to him, who now has so much cause to curse it, makes me superior to all selfish thoughts.

Mand. Is it possible? You that have had a fashionable education! you that have been schooled in all the arts of modern foppery, and foreign folly! you to be the only one to pity or befriend me!

How. Why, the fact is, they tried hard to spoil me, but I wouldn't let them: they sent me all over the continent, before I'd been half over England; taught me foreign languages before I knew my own; instructed me how to pick my teeth all the morning in Bond-street; yawn all night at the opera. But I was a bad scholar, Mr. Mandeville: and the satisfaction I feel at this moment proves I did right to educate myself. Now then for Albina! They may have perverted my head, but I assure you, they hav'n't corrupted my heart. [*exeunt*

ACT II.

SCENE I—*a modern apartment in the castle.*

enter VERRITAS *and Mrs.* RIGID.

Mrs. R. Yes, yes: Albina already thinks me the best of women, and shall soon believe that you are the first of men.

Ver. Granted: but about Howard—Is she as fond of him as ever?

Mrs. R. No; she don't like him half so well as she did. Ever since he left Dover, I have been undermining him, and extolling you; and in proof of my argument, Sir Solomon has just told her of Howard's intimacy with a gamekeeper's daughter. This has roused her jealousy, her indignation.

Ver. Indeed!

Mrs. R. Yes; and as he has now lost her affections—

Ver. I may soon win them: bravo, master Veritas! you're lord and master of ten thousand a year!

Mrs. R. Ten thousand? heyday! have you forgot our agreement? Please to recollect that on the day of your marriage with Albina, I am to receive half.

Ver. Half?

Mrs. R. To be sure. What other motive could I have for getting Mandeville disinherited? Did not Albina gain the property through my management? Did not I make a dupe of the grandfather?

Ver. You did.

Mrs. R. And why do I give you my interest? Why do I select you for her husband? why, but because you are to give me a moiety?

Ver. Granted. We'll divide the fortune, and thus I seal the bargain, thus with a righteous kiss—

Mrs. R. (*drawing back*) How! is the man out of his senses? Don't you recollect—

Ver. I do. I beg pardon—you're for the Platonic.

Mrs. R. I *am* for the Platonic system, sir,

and hitherto I have not suffered my lips to be profaned by man! Never, sir! not so much from fear of the consequences to myself, as from the danger in which it might involve all mankind.

Ver. That's true philanthropy, Mrs. Rigid; and the longer you persevere in your system the more our sex will be obliged to you. Ha! here comes Albina. Pray, is she also for the Platonic?

Mrs. R. Sweet little innocent! she has hardly sense enough to discriminate one passion from another. She is the most artless, lively, tender-hearted creature! Look at her, cousin. Only eighteen.

enter ALBINA.

Alb. Oh, governess! I have been all over the castle, looking at the rooms, the pictures, the—
(*seeing Veritas, she stops*)

Mrs. R. 'Tis Mr. Veritas. You saw him at Dover, you know.

Alb. So I did; he was there at the same time Mr. Howard was. Oh, lord! I'm so happy to see you, sir! I am indeed.

Ver. Granted. She loves me! Poor pupil! poor Howard! (*aside to Mrs. Rigid*)

Alb. That I am, because now I shall hear something about Mr. Howard. (*to Veritas*) Pray, Mr. Tutor—first we'll talk of his looks, if you please—Is he as handsome now, as charming as ever?

Mrs. R. For shame, Albina! After what you have just heard from Sir Solomon, how can you condescend to name him? Did not he tell you of his passion for a gamekeeper's daughter?

Alb. He did; but—

Mrs. R. What, miss?

Alb. That passion may be only Platonic, you know, governess!

Mrs. R. Look'ye: let me hear no more of Mr. Howard. If you mention his name again, I'll resort to my old mode of punishment; I'll shew you I have not forgot the art of locking up, miss.

Alb. There now! I thought it would come to this: the owner of this immense castle will pass most of her days in one of the closets!

Mrs. R. No murmuring, but go directly with this worthy man; walk with him to see the park, the plantations.

Alb. Well, since it must be so, come, Mr.—Worthy.

Ver. (*aside to Albina*) Mum! I am not what I seem. When we're alone, I'll communicate. Cousin, we take our leave.

Alb. Madam, good day. (*going*)

enter SIR SOLOMON.

Alb. Oh, Sir Solomon, you're the very person I wanted to see. Do you know, there's an old man in the hall, who says he was servant to my grandfather thirty years; and now because his dogs killed a hare on your grounds, that he is dismissed from his place, and he and his family must starve. Dear! if all your game is purchased at so high a price, I wonder you're not choaked!

Mrs. R. Go where I ordered you, miss. Sir Solomon and I have business.

Alb. And, Sir—Sir Solomon! how came you to trouble yourself about Mr. Howard's love af-

fairs? I tell you what—I believe you're a great poacher, and if I catch you snaring any game on my manor—

Mrs. R. Begone, miss; begone directly.

Alb. Well, I'm going, governess, I'm going. Come, Mr. Tutor; and if we meet that poor old man by the way, I'll tell him he may kill all the game on my estate; and if that won't keep his family from starving, I'll bid him shoot all Sir Solomon's. I have plenty of money, and I can't dispose of it better than in protecting an old favourite of him who gave it me! Come, good b'ye. [*Veritas and Albina exeunt*

Sir Sol. Um! there's the sex, there's true woman!

Mrs. R. I must watch her—her disposition alters with her fortune. But, Sir Solomon, now we're alone, what is the secret you promised to communicate to me?

Sir Sol. I'll tell you—Mandeville is arrived—I've seen him.

Mrs. R. Seen Mandeville!

Sir Sol. Not half an hour ago. He is now in search of his daughter.

Mrs. R. Mandeville come home! Mercy! What shall we do? Why, if he once gets hold of her, he'll persuade her to pay his debts, trick her out of the whole fortune.

Sir Sol. I know it. He's a sad profligate; and therefore do you lock up Albina, and I'll lock up Mandeville. We'll keep them apart, till she has got a husband to protect her. I'll go directly, and order Realize to take out a writ.

Mrs. R. Will you?

Sir Sol. I will. Odsheart! it was the wish of my life that Howard should marry Albina; but his attachment to other women shows he is not worthy her affections; and his now associating with her father, proves he would waste every shilling of the property: therefore the sooner she marries Mr. Veritas the better. Adieu! Go and lock her up.

Mrs. R. I won't lose a moment. Ah, Sir Solomon, if Mr. Howard had copied the example of his uncle! If, like you, he had never associated with profligate men, or low-bred women! —You would not have fixed your affections on a game-keeper's daughter?

Sir Sol. Me! Lord help you, how could you suppose such a thing? *(confused)*

Mrs. R. I don't suppose it I know she is too unpolished, too illiterate—

Sir Sol. Psha! she's too young, too—too every thing. No, Mrs. Rigid, if ever I again become a slave to the tender passions, I should select a woman of your time of life, a woman of experience. Your young things take no pains to please a man; they rely on their youth and beauty: but your middle-aged woman, she is so industrious; she dresses at you, talks at you, glances at you—Oh, time makes women wonderfully dextrous in the art of love!

[*exeunt: Mrs. Rigid ogling Sir Solomon*

SCENE II—*a garden.*

enter VERITAS *and* ALBINA.

Ver. Ha! ha! ha! I told you I was not what I seemed. It was very well to put on the mask

of learning and gravity before Sir Solomon and Mrs. Rigid; but now I'll pull it off, now I'll show you my real character. Bless you, I'm an honest fellow! I'm a choice spirit, a buck of the first water!

Alb. And pray, sir, what a made a man of your gaiety become an usher?

Ver. You shall hear: I finished my fortune before I finished my education. At Westminster school I found I could keep a curricle; at Oxford I found I could keep a pack of hounds, and in London I found—I could not keep myself. So not wishing so much talent should remain in obscurity, I set up for tutor, in order to disperse my knowledge amongst the rising generation.

Alb. Upon my word the rising generation is very much obliged to you.

Ver. Nay: if I have not done much good, I have done little harm; for with all my follies, of this you may be assured, I never did right without rejoicing at it, or wrong without repenting it. This is my history. And now to apply my talents to the right purpose, to love! here's Mrs. Rigid.

enter Mrs. RIGID.

Mrs. R. Cousin, a word. (*takes Veritas aside*) Mandeville is returned from India: he and Howard are now in search of Albina; and if an interview takes place, we are undone. Go; and if you find Mandeville, give notice to Realize, and he'll arrest him instantly.

Ver. Arrest him?

Mrs. R. To be sure. What does the man stare at? have you any objection?

Ver. Why, I think when a gentleman comes a long journey—

Mrs. R. Well, sir?

Ver. That a spunging-house is a bad sort of inn to put up at.

Mrs. R. How, are you only half a sinner? do you repent our bargain? Mighty well, sir, mighty well! A fine girl and five thousand a year isn't likely long to want a husband; others may be found, sir—

Ver. Granted: others may be found; and five thousand a-year is not to be despised. Besides, I shall make amends by making her a good husband. So I'll swallow my scruples, and go directly. Cousin, your servant. Miss Albina, adieu. [*exit*

Mrs. R. Albina, I beg you will instantly accompany me to the castle; and, for reasons which I will hereafter explain to you, I must request you to live in private, neither to pay nor receive visits.

Alb. Lord! I know your reasons well enough; you want me not to see Mr. Howard. Well, I do love him, that's the truth on't: but if he don't love me, what can I do, you know? No! I had rather not see him; 'twill remind me of past happiness; and if he be shut out from me, the more private I live the better. Come, I'll think of him no more.

Mrs. R. Spoke like a girl of proper pride and exalted spirit. Now, all's safe.

(*as they are going, Howard enters*)

How. So, I've found you at last, Albina: I called at the castle, and the servants told me they had orders from Doctor Busby not to ad-

mit me.—I beg pardon, Mrs. Rigid, I didn't allude to you, I didn't mean to call you Doctor Busby.

Mrs R. None of your insolence, sir! Albina is no more willing to be troubled with your company than I am.

How. Isn't she?

Mrs. R. No: you may hear your dismissal from her own mouth. Speak, child; repeat to him what you imparted to me this moment.

Alb. I can't. Do you speak for me.

Mrs. R. Repeat it, I tell you; show him you don't care for him: say you are all gaiety and cheerfulness: say so, I insist.

Alb. Sir, sir, I am all gaiety and cheerfulness! I'm so happy that—Oh, oh, oh! *(bursts into tears)* I shall break my heart, that's what I shall!

How. So! this is a new mode of being cheerful.

Mrs. R. Ideot, baby! call forth your pride: remember your rank, your fortune.

Alb. Fortune! what's the use of it, while another is heiress to his affections? If the gamekeeper's daughter will give me his heart, I'm sure I'll give her my estate. Oh, Mr. Howard! *(going up to him)*

Mrs. R. (laying hold of her) This isn't to be borne; come with me this moment; stand out of the way, sir. Come, I command you.

How. Hold! *(detaining Albina)* It isn't on my own account I thus rudely detain you; 'tis on your father's.

Alb. My father's!

How. He is arrived from India, unfortunate man!—is now in the neighbourhood.

Alb. Is he? We'll go to him directly. Come, governess.

Mrs. R. Go to him! are you mad? Why he'll ask you to pay all his debts.

Alb. No, he won't: for I'll offer it long before he can ask me. Come.

Mrs R. Have a care: don't go near him: I know him to be so unprincipled and so desperate, that if you refuse to give him up your fortune, I shouldn't be surprised if he threatened, nay actually took away your life.

Alb. Took away my life! Well, he gave it me, you know, governess; and as to the fortune, that certainly ought to have been his. However, as I never did, nor never will disobey you, I'll tell you how we'll accommodate matters: Mr. Howard will be kind enough to say that you won't allow me to see him; but that, as to money, lord! he may have what he likes.

Mrs. R. What he likes?

Alb. Ay: bid him draw for a good round sum at once, fifty thousand to begin with. And if that won't do—

How. Oh, fifty thousand will do very well for a beginning! won't it, doctor?

Mrs. R. Hear me, Albina. Would you undo yourself, and abandon me? I who have nursed you, reared you, doated on you? I who have been a mother when he proved no father? Go, ungrateful girl, give all to him who forsook you, and leave her who cherished you to starve and die in a prison.

Alb. Die in a prison! Leave my kind, good governess to die in a prison? Oh lord! I can't bear the thought of it! *(Mrs. Rigid weeps)*

Nay: don't cry so, speak to me, pray speak; Dear! what was it she said, Mr. Howard?

How. She said you'd better give me the fifty thousand directly.

Mrs. R. Millions cannot save a man so extravagant as Mr. Mandeville. This was your grandfather's opinion; and he left you the estate solely to prevent his wasting it. And now would you fly in the face of your benefactor? and for what? Only because a faithless lover takes the part of a selfish parent, who, till you became affluent, never thought or enquired after you.

Alb. That's very true—

How. It's not; it's false!

Alb. I know better, sir. But for this good woman, I might have starved, and I'm bound to fulfil the intentions of my dear grandfather; and therefore—don't take on so, my dear governess, and I'll follow your advice in every thing—don't keep twitching me, Mr. Howard! I shall do whatever she orders me.

How. You will, will you?

Alb. Yes; I act differently from you, sir; I always obey my tutor, and I won't—

How. And you won't skip a task, or go out of bounds, for fear of being whipped, hah! Oh, the good child! Oh, the pretty Miss Albina! She shall have cakes and toys, and—Look'ye, give over this childish nonsense, and go with me to the game-keeper's cottage—

Alb. The game-keeper's cottage?

How. *(taking hold of her hand)* There your father is concealed; I left him under the care of Copsley's daughter, one of the kindest, best-disposed—

Alb. (taking away her hand) Go, sir, I'm satisfied, and I hate you, that's what I do: I hate you more than ever I loved you. Come, governess.

How. Why, Albina, why?

Alb. I have as much pride as yourself, sir; and since you treat me with indifference, I shall treat you with scorn, with scorn, sir! Come, madam.

How. 'Sdeath, what have I said?

Mrs. R. Quite enough, sir: go to your darling rustic—go to your dear Mr. Mandeville; and, by way of consolation, tell him that if ever you possess an estate—

How. If ever I do, madam, he shall have it all. And I'll give it him, not so much from motives of benevolence as of prudence; since I perceive that money can transform the most liberal to the most selfish; and she who, without a fortune, was all innocence, tenderness, and affection, is, in affluence, suspicious, credulous, and unfeeling—Farewell! Mandeville has a child still; for, while you are a slave to your governess, I'll be a son to your father.

Mrs. R. This is your resolution, is it?

How. It is, most potent, grave, and reverend doctor! [*exit*

Mrs. R. Now, Albina, look at the advantages of a good education: how contemptible was Howard's conduct! how noble yours! continue to behave thus, and you shall be indulged in every thing.

Alb. Ah! I wish you would indulge me, governess—there is a favour—

Mrs. R. Is there? name it.

Alb. Why, you already think me a good girl; but if I could be quite positive about Mr. Howard's inconstancy, I should be the very best girl in the whole world.

Mrs. R. What, do you still doubt?

Alb. How can I help it? How can I think so meanly of him or myself, as to suppose he would prefer a girl that's like—in short that I dare say is as unlike me as you are to Doctor Busby. Come now, as he's gone to the cottage, do let me follow him and be convinced.

Mrs. R. Follow him?

Alb. Why not? Look'ye, you and Sir Solomon say he is guilty. Very well! if I find him so, I'll promise to marry the steward, the parson, or the birch gentleman, any, or all of them if you like.

Mrs R. There's no doubt of his guilt, and this may complete her aversion; therefore I'll let her go. (*aside*) Well, on these conditions, I've no objection. But how will you contrive?

Alb. Oh, he sha'n't know me; I'll put on another dress.

Mrs. R. Another dress?

Alb. Yes: I'll disguise myself as the little Red Riding-hood, Little John, little Pickle, or any other impudent character. Come, we'll settle that as we go along: and if I find him innocent, why you shall have one-half the estate; my father the other; and I and Mr. Howard will live and die in the cottage, or any other retired spot you choose to point out for us.

[*exeunt*

ACT III.

SCENE I—*view of open country, river, cottage at a distance, &c.*

enter MANDEVILLE *and* HOWARD.

Mand. Nay, nay; blame not Albina; blame the governess.

How. Not blame her! Oh, if I look, or speak, or listen, or—'sdeath you don't know half the fatal consequences of her unfilial conduct! Sir Solomon has ordered Realize to arrest you: he and bailiffs are now in search of you; and, unless you can instantly raise two thousand pounds, you'll be imprison'd.

Mand. Well, I am resigned.

How. So am not I. I hate a gaol; and as I must follow you wherever you go, pray let us keep in the open air as long as we can. The fact is, there is no staying here without paying your creditors; therefore let's adjourn to London: there we may do as we like.

Mand. Do as we like?

How. Ay: few people think of paying there. Why, if every man in London were to be arrested for the money he owed! Mercy on us! there'd be more prisons than carriages; more bailiffs than horses; and men of fashion and dashing citizens would be the two rarest commodities to be met with! Oh, when a man is in debt, the capital is the place to lie snug in! therefore let's begone directly. Stop though—have you any cash?

Mand. Not a guinea. Out of my pay as an officer, I could hardly save money enough to land me in my native country.

How. And I have not a shilling! and here we are two hundred miles from Hyde Park corner, without two hundred pence to take us there. What's to be done? Will Sir Solomon advance? Not a halfpenny! Will the tutor? Not a farthing! Will Realize?

Mand. The steward! he wouldn't give half a crown to save both our lives.

How. Not half a crown to save our lives! Come, come, you wrong him there; I'm sure he'd give more to save mine.

Mand. More to save yours! from what motive? from benevolence?

How. No: from self-interest. He has an annuity on my life. The day I lose my existence he loses a hundred a-year; and though he wouldn't give a doit to save me from perdition, I think he'd pay half a crown to preserve his annuity. Look, here he comes: and now I think on't, suppose I try to get our travelling expenses out of him? He is always enquiring after my health, and—

Mand. I understand. I'll get out of the way.

How. Do. Retire behind those trees—mum! Observe. (*Mandeville goes behind trees*)

enter REALIZE.

Real. So, I've drawn out my forces to the best advantage: two of my officers are in ambush near the castle, two are reconnoitering on the London road, and two—ha! Mr. Howard! how d'ye do, Mr. Howard?

How. Hem! (*coughing and stuffing his handkerchief into his mouth*)

Real. Have you seen any thing of Mandeville? I've two writs out against him, one on my own account, the other on Sir Solomon's; and if you'll tell me where he is—(*Howard coughs loudly*) Why, what's the matter with you? That's an ugly cough.

How. Ugly! it's frightful, it's—hem! Oh, Mr. Realize, I'm very ill.

Real. Ill! You were very well yesterday, and the day before, and every day since you came from your travels.

How. That's it: I didn't mention it before, Mr. Realize, for fear of distressing you; but, during my travels—Ough! ou! ou! (*coughing violently*) I slept in the Pontine marshes; and the pestiferous dews so inflamed my lungs, that ever since—Hoop! oop! (*coughing*) I shall die, that's certain.

Real. Die! Impossible! Die! I've an annuity on his life! Oh, curse those Pontine marshes!

How. It's all Sir Solomon's fault. If he'd let me follow the doctor's advice, I should save my life, and you your annuity. But avarice, Mr.—ava—Oop!—hem! I'm a dead man!

Real. You're not! Now pray live! I'll take it as a favour if you live. My dear Mr. Howard, what did the doctor prescribe?

How. Change of air and Bristol waters.

Real. Bristol waters!

How. Yes, sir; and because I can't raise money to take me there—Oop!—because Sir Solomon won't advance a few pounds—

Real. I'm to lose a hundred a year. Oh, the hard-hearted savage! Why, I'd better give the money myself. I will. Here, Mr. Howard, (*taking*

out a purse) I was always of a humane disposition, and so here's thirty—Hold, though, are you sure the Bristol waters will cure you ?

How. Certain. The detergency of the atmosphere; the absorbency of the chalybeate; the ponderosity of——Hau ! au !—I'm convulsed ! Support me, lay hold of me ! (*in his convulsions he lays hold of the hand in which Realize has the purse*) So, let me go : I'm better now—thank'-ye. (*takes away his hand and the purse with it*)

Real. Better ! 'Gad, no wonder at it. The dose you've taken is more likely to do you good than detergency, absorbency, or all the doctors and apothecaries in Europe ! However, a hundred per annum is worth thirty pounds, or the devil's in it ! So keep it, and good bye to you. Hark'ye, though, if you see Mandeville, don't say I've placed bailiffs on the London road.

How. I won't. Good bye. I hope I shall mend for your sake, Mr. Realize.

Real. I hope you will. But if you do not, if you find you grow worse, write me word you are coming home full of health and spirits, and I'll go directly to Sir Solomon, talk of the goodness of your life, and sell him the annuity at a premium. That will be punishing him for his stinginess, and paying me for the dose of physic I've given you. Farewell ! keep yourself warm, and success to the Bristol waters. Oh, curse those Pontine marshes. [*exit*

How. O bless them, I say. Ha, ha, ha ! I'm cured of my cough now—Hem ! (*clearing himself*) Come forth, Mr. Mandeville. (*Mandeville re-enters*) Come and congratulate your friend on the recovery of his health. Look : will you go to Bristol ?

Mand. No: to London.

How. Not yet; there are enemies on the road. We must wait till the pursuit is over; and, as I know no safer place than Copsley's cottage, let's return there instantly. Let us go sit and rail at the governess and Albina.

Mand. Never. I must still think she is my daughter, and hope the time may come when she will imitate her mother's virtues. Oh, Howard, you should have known Amelia: she had a heart as generous as your own: like you she gave up all for a distressed, unhappy—

How. Nay; no more melancholy now, Mr. Mandeville. How can a man talk of distress, when he sees he can raise thirty pounds the moment he wants it? A slight cough and a short convulsion will be at any time a bank note to us. So now for the cottage; and over a jug of old Copsley's October, let us drink "Confusion to our enemies and the Pontine marshes, and success to ourselves and the Bristol waters."

[*holding up a purse and exeunt*

SCENE II—*a forward landscape.*

enter ALBINA, *in the uniform of a lieutenant of the navy, Mrs.* RIGID *and* REALIZE.

Mrs. R. We won't detain you a moment, Mr. Steward. Only show us the way to Copsley's cottage, and you may return to your pursuit of Mandeville. This young gentleman, Mr. Herbert—

Real. Herbert! Pray is this one of the late Mrs. Mandeville's nephews?

Alb. I am, sir. I am the first cousin of Miss Albina, sir; of that much wronged and most beautiful creature, sir. I am lately come from sea, and have been in so many fiery engagements that I don't know whether I am alive or dead, sir!

Real. Po, po! nonsense! (*puts on his spectacles and looks close at Albina*) You been in fiery engagements! pooh!

Mrs. R. Come, come; Mr. Realize is too well acquainted with every part of the family to be imposed upon; and therefore we may as well trust him at once. It is Albina: she has put on this disguise to detect Mr. Howard in his love affair with the gamekeeper's daughter.

Alb. Yes, sir; with that little coarse, tann'd —Show us the way, sir; I know Mr. Howard is now at the cottage.

Real. Do you? That's very good. Love affair too! ha, ha! I wish you could prove your words.

Alb. Why, sir?

Real. Because it would have saved me thirty pounds. Why, poor gentleman, he is not in a state to make love—

Alb. How, sir?

Real. No; the Pontine marshes have played the devil with his lungs, and he is gone to drink the Bristol waters.

Mrs. R. Gone to Bristol! When?

Real. Now, this very moment.

Alb. Which way? How did he go?

Real. How? Why, he went with my money.

Mrs. R. Psha! This is all an imposition; all a contrivance of Howard's to avoid detection.

Lead on, sir; I'm sure his lungs were sound enough two hours ago.

Real. Well, have it your own way: I only wish I was as sure of keeping my annuity as that you won't find him at the cottage. No, and what's more to the purpose, that you find somebody else there.

Mrs. R. Somebody else! Whom, sir?

Real. No less a gentleman than Sir Solomon Cynic. Not ten minutes ago I saw him hovering about the spot, like an old kite over a brood of chickens.

Mrs. R. Why, the man's mad. Sir Solomon make love! Show us the way, I insist, sir. Come, child.

Alb. Dear! if after all, the old woman-hater should turn out to be the real poacher! if he should, governess, I'm sure you won't any longer forbid me the sight of Mr. Howard. 'Tis cruel to sport with the affections of a lover; and in the words of the old song, let me remind you—

SONG.

If 'tis joy to wound a lover,
How much more to give him ease!
When his passion we discover,
Oh, how pleasing 'tis to please! &c. [*exeunt*

SCENE III—*a room in Copsley's cottage; birds of prey painted on the wall; a recess, with several trusses of straw in it; before recess an old green curtain, partly broken down; a table and two chairs; basket with apples; jug of ale and small mug.*

SIR SOLOMON *discovered kneeling to* CICELY.

Sir Sol. Oh, you loveliest of all creatures! When I railed at the sex I did not know you:

you have converted me; your charms have made me a proselyte, and here I swear, here in this low submissive, suppliant—Wheugh! (*whistling with pain*) This it is to be out of practice! My knees are so unaccustomed to the office, that I believe I'd better get up while I'm able; (*rises*) So, come, I'll give you a toast, my little cherub; (*goes to the table, and takes up a jug of ale*) Here's Cupid, victorious Cupid!

Cic. Lord! you're so gallant, Sir Solomon!

Sir Sol. Gallant! I have more requisites for a lover than any man since the days of Mark Antony. I can write sonnets, throw glances, talk nonsense, tell lies, sing, dance—no, hang it, I can't dance; if I could, I shouldn't be compelled to drink "Confusion to all dancing-masters!" (*drinking*)

Cic. Well; but, your honour, I hope my poor father will be restored to his situation; I am so unhappy—

Sir Sol. I see you are, and I know the cause. Take comfort, I'll give you love for love. But how shall we meet? how carry on our amour in a snug, private, pastoral way? how shall I steal to you unnoticed and unseen? And now I think on't—zounds! I hope nobody's observing us—if I should be found out, if *I* should be detected in an intrigue!

Cic. An intrigue, sir?

Sir Sol. Hark'ye: to make all safe, we'll go to London. There we may make assignations without being talked of or interrupted.

Cic. (*with anger*) Indeed!

Sir Sol. Yes. There half the town are playing at the same game: but here in the country, if

one gets a sly kiss, the whole village is sure to hear the smack of it. So Marybone is the mark, a new house and smart liveries; a curricle and a pair of greys; a piano-forte and a lap-dog—and you shall go by another name.

Cic. What, shall I change my name? Oh, sir! *(curtsies very low)*

Sir Sol. To be sure; you shall no longer be called Cicely Copsley.

Cic. Shall I be your wife? Oh, dear! *(with great joy)*

Sir Sol. My wife?

Cic. Shall I be lady Cynic?

Sir Sol. You lady Cynic! you my—ha, ha, ha! Why, my dear girl, you misconceive; I wish to intrigue myself; I don't want to be the cause of intriguing in others: marry you! Lord help you, I wouldn't take such a liberty. *(knocking at the door)* Hah! what, who's here?

Cic. Heaven knows; perhaps my father, perhaps Mr. Howard, perhaps—

Sir Sol. A dancing-master! Oh, you sorceress, you've lured me here to expose me.

Howard, (without) Holloa, Copsley, Cicely!

Sir Sol. Howard's voice! mercy on me! if you don't get me off, I'll have your father hang'd —I'll—here—I'll go into this room.

Cic. Stop, that's my chamber: here, sir, go into that place, *(pointing to the recess)* and I'll draw the curtain before you. Quick, quick.

Sir Sol. This is my first amour these twenty years: and if ever I come near a petticoat again may Cupid fly away with me! *(he enters recess and sits on a truss of straw)* So, draw the curtain.

Cic. I can't: you see it's broken down, and —Dear, dear, how shall I fasten it?

Sir Sol. Here, here, my cane has a sword in it; (*draws the sword out of the cane, and gives it to Cicely*) If there's a cranny in the wainscot, run this through the curtain; if not, run it through my body. (*Cicely gets upon a chair and runs the sword through the curtain, which supports it*) Oh, woman, woman! destructive, damnable, deceitful woman! (*Sir Solomon is concealed, and Cicely opens the door*)

enter MANDEVILLE *and* HOWARD.

How. (*holding the door open and looking out*) Look out, look out, I tell you: 'tis Realize and the governess; and by their coming this way, I fear you are discovered. Hush, observe.

Mand. I do; and see, the young naval officer is advancing towards the cottage!

How. So he is: we must avoid him.

Albina. (*without*) "The stormy main, the wind and rain." (*singing*)

How. Ah, you chirruping scoundrel! I tell you what, we had better step into this apartment, and let Cicely get rid of him: mind, nobody is here, Cicely. That a naval officer! pooh! don't you see through his disguise?

Mand. Disguise?

How. He's a bailiff: can't you discriminate between the navy and the law, between a sea officer and a sheriff's officer? I know by the rascal's impudent swagger that he's a bailiff. Here he comes; mum, retire.

[*exeunt at the opposite door*

enter ALBINA *in the uniform.*

Alb. (*spying and walking round the room*) "The stormy main, the wind and rain!" (*singing*) I don't see Mr. Howard—"My ardent passion prove!" He's concealed somewhere, I suppose. "Lash'd to the helm"—(*goes up to the curtain*) He's here;—"Should seas o'erwhelm"—

Cic. (*stopping her*) What do you want, sir?

Alb. "To think of thee, my love!" (*trying to undraw the curtain*)

Cic. (*pulling her away*) There's nobody there, sir.

Alb. Then they're here; "And think of thee, my love!" (*goes towards the door*) Perhaps, after all, he is really gone to Bristol; and his lungs are so much out of order. (*trying to open the door, and finding it lock'd*) Lock'd! where's the key? Oh, oh, (*stoops down*) I see him through the key-hole. Oh, you barbarian! (*Cicely tries to pull her away*) If you touch me, you little vulgar thing, I'll cut you into atoms. I see you, Mr. Howard. (*hollaing through the key-hole*)

Cic. Sir, I beseech you—

Alb. (*trying to pull the door open*) Oh, if I could but get at him! Come out, sir, or I'll pull the door—(*shaking it violently*)

enter HOWARD.

How. Well, sir, what do you want, sir? what have you to say?

Alb. Say, sir! I'm glad your lungs are better.

How. (*standing before the door*) My lungs! Hark'ye, sir, if you want Mr. Mandeville—

Alb. I want you, and only you, sir; my name is Herbert, I am first cousin to Albina; and if you don't instantly fall on your knees, and ask pardon for the insults you have put upon her, I'll make you a companion for that wild goose, I'll run you through the body, and pin you against the wall—'slife, now I look at you, I wonder what she could see in your ugly face to be so fond of you.

How. I'm glad it's not a bailiff, however. (*aside*) Sir, if you are that lady's cousin, I must inform you she isn't worth my pity, or your resentment. She is neither faithful to her lover, nor affectionate to her father; in short, sir, I thought her a child of nature, and I found her a Becky.

Alb. A Becky!

How. Yes: a Becky, sir: and till she reforms her conduct, not all the fighting men in Europe shall make me alter mine. This is my determination, and so you may tell her, good Captain Bobadil.

Alb. Bobadil!

How. Yes: Bobadil may tell Becky—

Alb. Draw, sir. (*pulls out her sword*)

Cic. Hold, I entreat you, what is the cause—

Alb. You. Come, sir. (*flourishing her sword*)

Cic. Me?

Alb. His love for you is the cause. Sir Solomon told me of his falsehood, and now—

Cic. Sir Solomon told you?—Oh! base, slanderous man! Love never brought Mr. Howard to our cottage. No: he came from a far better motive, to bring money to my father, to relieve the distresses of his family: and, with gratitude I speak it, he has already saved us from ruin.

Alb. Indeed!

Cic. Yes: but for him we should have perished; and, as a proof that I wasn't the object of his affections, often and often have I heard him say, that Miss Albina was the girl of his heart, and that he never would or could love any other.

Alb. (*smiling*) Oh, did you say this, Mr. Howard?

How. You have heard my determination. I will not be teased with interrogatories.

Alb. (*going up to him*) Nay, don't be so hasty, Mr. Howard. Consider, if Sir Solomon has deceived me—

How. 'Tis now too late, sir: your visit, her partiality for her perfidious governess, and her neglect of a too liberal parent, are all, all so disgraceful, that, if ever I love again, depend on't Albina won't be the object.

Alb. (*sharply*) She won't! Who will then, sir?

How. Who, sir!

Alb. Ay, who, sir? will this little, coarse, insensible peasant?

How. Insensible! look him in the face, Cicely: (*taking her hand*) tell him you would die to serve your father; and ask him if Albina would shed a tear to save hers.

Alb. He presses her hand! let it go, sir; if you value your life, take away your hand, sir.

How. Why? she deserves it as much as your cousin.

Alb. I can't bear it, take it away! Then say your prayers, for you hav'n't a moment to live.

(*poking at him with her sword*)

How. Keep off, sir, you see I've no arms.

Alb. No arms! that's a poor evasion, coward!

How. Coward! Oh, that I could find a weapon! is there no poker, no knife, no—ha, what do I see? a sword! Now, villain!

Cic. Hear me, sir, don't touch it, for Heaven's sake!

Alb. Hear her, sir, don't touch it, for Heaven's sake!

How. Thus I expose folly and deception! *(pulls out the sword that supports the curtain, it falls, and Sir Solomon is discovered sitting on one truss of straw, with others around him)* Expose folly and deception indeed!

Alb. He's innocent, he's innocent! Oh, Howard!

How. What, the old woman-hater turned poacher! ha, ha, ha! Why, uncle!

Alb. Why, man of straw! ha, ha, ha! Look how the old fox squats in the stubble! Come, *(handing him out)* what have you to say?

Sir Sol. Nothing. I'll go home and read Paradise Lost.

How. And curse Cupid and Mark Antony. And now, sir, *(to Albina)* what have you to say?

Alb. That I sincerely ask your pardon: that I see you have been slandered, cruelly slandered. And if Albina was before partial to you, she shall now esteem you more than ever. Will you forgive me, sir? I'll tell her all that has passed, every thing—no, I wont tell her you called her Becky. You don't call her Becky now, do you?

Mrs. Rigid, (*without*) Mr. Herbert! Mr. Herbert!

Alb. You hear I'm called, sir: do we part friends?

How. We do: I'm satisfied.

Alb. And I needn't mention Becky?

How. No, no.

Alb. Then, let my governess say what she will, Howard is the husband for Albina! (*aside*) Farewell, sir, we shall meet again. Cicely, there's money for you. And, Sir Solomon, the next time a game-keeper catches one of your hares, don't snare one of his daughters, and make him starve for it into the bargain. And also, to cover your own poaching practices, don't slander an innocent gentleman. If you do, I'll chain you to your bed of straw, depend on't. Adieu, Mr. Howard.

"Lash'd to the helm, should seas o'erwhelm,
I'll think on thee, my love." [*exit*

Sir Sol. Sir, you may smile, and chuckle, and triumph; but I'll be revenged on you and Mr. Mandeville yet. I know he is in that room. I saw him sneak in there; and while Realize secures him, Veritas shall secure Albina. I'll overtake Mrs. Rigid, the match shall take place this very night; and then, sir—

How. Nay; why should you fret? Upon my soul, I think you're a very lucky fellow—if you had not been in the straw, somebody else might. You understand?

Sir Sol. I do: and I've plague enough with nephews without wishing for children to torment me. Let me go, let me follow Mrs. Rigid. (*Cicely stops him*) Out of the way, jilt, sorceress, Jezabel! or, to sum up all in one emphatic word—out of the way, woman! [*exit*

Mand. (*peeping*) Is the coast clear?

Howard (*opens the door, and enter Mandeville*) Well, have you heard what has passed?

Mand. I have. I perceive this is no longer a place of safety; and what's worse, that Albina's marriage is to take place this very night! Is there no way to break it off? Consider, for her own sake, for yours, for mine, we should prevent it, if we can.

How. Prevent it! how?

Mand. Have you no influence over the tutor? Has he no sense of honour?

How. Why, if it be true, that "wine draws forth the natural disposition of the heart," Veritas has still some virtue; for over a bottle I've seen him display most excellent qualities. I'll go to him; I'll try to delay, if not break off, the marriage. In the mean time you shall take refuge in the uninhabited part of the castle.

Mand. Why there?

How. Because it is supposed to be haunted; and Realize and his followers won't come there, for fear of seeing the devil before their time, you know. Come, while I go to the tutor, Cicely shall show you the place. Oh, you little gleaner, if I had known that straw contained such weighty heads of corn amongst it, how I would have thresh'd it! I'd have laid my flail about its ears, till I had beat every grain of prejudice out of it, and made the old woman-hater acknowledge,

> That let us rail at women, scorn, and flout them,
> We may live with, but cannot live without them.

[*exeunt*

ACT IV.

SCENE I—*a modern apartment in the castle.*

enter HOWARD *and* VERITAS.

How. What, Veritas turn'd flincher! Come, one more bottle, my boy.

Ver. I tell you I've had enough. I'm going to be married; and would you have me get drunk before the ceremony's performed?

How. To be sure: would a man marry in his sober senses? Come, though we're rivals, don't let us be enemies; though you've cut me out with Albina, I bear you no ill will. Do let us part friends. Come, one more bottle.

Ver. I would, but you know my failing, George: wine makes me so cruelly sentimental, it overflows my heart with sympathy, runs out of my eyes in streams of sensibility; and when I'm no longer myself, I'm so moral and so honest.

How. So you are. When you're not yourself, you're a damn'd good sort of fellow.

Ver. Granted: I'm never so upright in my conduct, as when I can't stand on my legs! Then wine always makes me speak truth; and if I don't take care, I shall tell you at this moment, that I am a scoundrel, that the governess is another, and that Albina—Good night, George. After the wedding's over, I'll reform and be a six-bottle man. But now, spare and pity me.

How. Pity you! why?

Ver. Because I'm going to behave like a villain.

How. You're not: I'll prevent you.

Ver. 'Tis too late: the dark deed is on the eve of execution. Albina's locked up in the old baron's chamber—the lawyer has prepared the settlement—the parson has got the license, and —Damnation! what am I about—I shall confess every thing—good night!

How. Here's my uncle and the governess! What can it all mean? look'ye, Veritas, if some new act of villany is in preparation, do you think I'll suffer my old fellow-traveller to be concerned in it? No: I have too much regard for your honour; and I know you are so apt to repent—

Ver. I am; and the wine converts me already. I'm a fair penitent; and so let's go and drink whole oceans—And yet, George, I don't like to lose Albina: she is the only woman I shall ever love.

How. Nonsense! you've only drunk one bottle, and therefore there's only one Albina. Drink another, and there'll be a thousand Albinas! Come along, my fine fellow, and if wine will make you moral, dam'me but you shall drink honesty by hogsheads! [*exeunt*

enter SIR SOLOMON *and Mrs.* RIGID.

Mrs. R. Don't tell me, Sir Solomon. Is she to be my mistress, or am I to be hers? Talk of marrying Howard, and refusing Veritas, only because you were uncurtain'd at the game-keeper's cottage. I wish you had never gone there, with all my heart.

Sir Sol. So do I, with all my soul. But you misconceive: I don't oppose the marriage; I only object to the manner of wooing. I don't like using force.

Mrs. R. Why not, sir? If entreaty fail, why shouldn't force be employed? Isn't it as much her interest to marry a man of honour as it is my duty to prevent her being united to a profligate?

Sir Sol. That's true.

Mrs. R. And hasn't Mr. Veritas both your promise and mine; and would it be honourable to break our word with him? No; I say once for all, she shall be his wife this very night. She is now locked up in the baron's chamber; and if she refuses, there she shall be imprisoned till she complies. She shall have no companions but ghosts and spectres, no food but bread and water, no bed but straw.

Sir Sol. Straw! there I must intercede for her: that's so bad a resting-place, that the very thought of it will spoil my night's sleep to a certainty. However, there is much reason in what you say; and if she won't select a good husband, we must choose one for her. So if the parson, the lawyer, and the tutor, are ready, I'll join the party; and we'll proceed to the baron's chamber in a body.

Mrs. R. Spoke like yourself, Sir Solomon. Stay, wait here a moment, while I go and prepare them. And if she dare be refractory—

Sir Sol. Refractory! why a tutor and a governess would alone terrify a girl of her age; but backed by a lawyer and a parson—Gad, I should like to see any body stand up against so formidable a quartetto. (*exit Mrs. Rigid*) I am glad of this. Now Howard will lose Albina, Mandeville will lose the estate, and the tutor will be rewarded for his integrity and sobriety.

(*noise without*) Bravo, here they come, and all in high spirits for the enterprise.

enter HOWARD *and* VERITAS, *arm in arm, drunk.*

How. Come along, pupil; come along, honesty. Uncle—how are you, uncle? Give me leave to introduce to you—a fair penitent!

Sir Sol. Why, how did you get into the castle? Who invited you?

How. My pupil here. Speak, suffering saint.

Sir Sol. Out of the way, sir. I'll hold no conversation with drunkards and buffoons—I'll talk to men of sense and gravity. Veritas, give me your hand.

Ver. Granted.

Sir Sol. And now let me give it to Albina. Puppy, will you be eye-witness to the marriage? Will you behold this worthy man take possession of your idol and ten thousand a year?

Ver. Look'ye, king Solomon—

How. Ay, mind, king Solomon.

Ver. If I thought Albina loved me, I'm so brimful of benevolence, that I'd take her without a guinea; but to marry her against her inclinations! to use force, to—I tell you it's a damned rascally transaction. And if you and the governess would get as drunk as I am, you'd be as much ashamed of it as I am. So drink, drink, and reform.

Sir Sol. I drink!

How. Why not, uncle? there's as much virtue in wine as in women! (*Sir Solomon holds up his cane to strike him, Veritas interposes*) What, have not you had enough of that cane? that pinner-up of old curtains. Pooh, I don't value

it a straw, not a straw. So come, pupil; you've made your speech. And now let's adjourn to the inn, and drink more draughts of morality.

enter Mrs. RIGID.

Mrs R. All's ready, all's prepared, Sir Solomon. Howard here! Why, cousin. (*going up to Veritas*)

How. (*stopping her*) Softly, doctor Busby, you won't let me speak to your pupil, therefore you must not talk to mine. He's a good boy, and you may corrupt him. Keep off.

Mrs. R. They're both intoxicated: Heaven defend me. Why, Veritas, are not you ashamed?

Ver. Not a bit. There's some apology for drunken honesty, but none for sober villany. So drink, drink, and reform.

How. Stick to your bottle, Doctor. 'In vino Veritas!' (*sings*)

Ver. Come, George.

Mrs. R. Come! Why, would you leave me at this moment? now, when Albina is locked up, when the lawyer and the clergyman are waiting? What shall I do?

How. Do? Tell the two black gentlemen to strike out the name of Veritas in their papers, substitute mine in its place, and I'll return and marry Albina in half an hour. No, I won't marry her. Till she's a good daughter, she sha'n't have a good husband. So come, my boy, now for the inn. I say though, isn't it a long way?

Ver. Long! No; when a man's drunk, it isn't the length.

How. True; it's the width. Farewell, most amiable, most Platonic pair. "To wine I flew to ease the pain!" (*both sing*)

Ver. Farewell, king Solomon!

How. Good b'ye, Doctor Busby. "To wine I flew," &c. [*exit with Veritas*

Mrs. R. Amazing! what does it mean, Sir Solomon? has Howard corrupted him?

Sir Sol. He has; and now I'm decided: they shall neither of them enter my doors again; and as for Mandeville, I'll make an example of him directly. I have traced him from the cottage to the back part of the castle: he is now concealed amongst the ruins; and I'll go order Realize to lay hold of him this very moment. In the interim, do you take care of Albina.

Mrs. R. Oh, she's very safe. I have placed Deborah, a steady old servant, as a guard over her; and the haunted chamber shall be her abode till we find a new husband for her. Good night, Sir Solomon. I couldn't have thought that Mr. Veritas would have turned out such a—But it's a strange world; and we have lived so long in it, that nothing ought now to perplex or surprise us.

Sir Sol. Nothing ever surprises me; and such are the changes of this whirl-about life, that though your system is Platonic love, and mine no love at all, yet I shouldn't be astonished if we were to become man and wife, and be as happy a couple, Mrs. Rigid, as—No, hang it, that would surprise me indeed!

[*exeunt severally.*

SCENE II—*an old gothic chamber, with doors at each wing; in the flat another door; over it is the portrait of a man in armour; a state bed.*

ALBINA, *still in the lieutenant's uniform, discovered writing.* DEBORAH, *waiting.*

Alb. Deborah, do take your hand from the table, Deborah: you shake it so, I can't go on with my letter. "Dear Mr. Howard," (*writing*)

Deb. Lord, miss, isn't it midnight? and aren't we alone in a haunted chamber?

Alb. Haunted! foolish nonsense. I suppose you've been prying into those new romances the governess bought for me, all about abbeys, skeletons, rusty daggers, fat monks, and fainting nuns. Pooh, it's all very well to frighten children; but for such grown-up misses as you and I, Deborah—Oh, we're not afraid of the dead, nothing but the living frightens us. So sit fast in your chair. And now for the letter, "Dear Mr. Howard, they've locked me up in an uninhabited part of the castle, and placed an old mastiff over me." (*the castle clock strikes one*)

Deb. There, he's coming.

Alb. Who's coming?

Deb. The baron, the baron!

Alb. What baron?

Deb. Why, in days of yore, an old Norman baron was murdered in that bed; and ever since, when the castle clock strikes one, that door is sure to open, (*pointing to it*) and in he stalks in black armour.

Alb. Does he indeed? Well, I shall be very glad to see him; and that we may have a full view of him, do snuff the candles.

Deb. Snuff the candles, miss?

Alb. Ay, let's see what he's made of, Deborah.

Deb. (*in her fright snuffs out one of the candles*) I saw the picture shake; and that's a sure sign the baron is approaching.

Alb. So it is. I'll frighten her away if I can. (*aside*) Hark, don't you hear the rattling of armour?

Deb. I do.

Alb. And the clanking of chains; and the screech-owl, and the ravens, and the cats, and the mice? and—don't you hear me, Deborah?

Deb. I do. Oh, lord! the governess may come and watch you herself. I won't stay to be hacked to pieces.

Alb. Hush, the door opens; and there he is as black as Beelzebub. O, dear, my courage fails me. Go to him, Deborah, and while he makes mince-meat of you, I shall have time to run away. Pray do, Deborah.

Deb. Not I: Heaven protect you!

[*exit, frightened*

Alb. Ha, ha, ha! what an old coward it is. Now nothing ever makes me tremble, nothing. O yes, the very thought of Howard makes me so nervous—heigho! I'll proceed with the letter: (*sits and writes*) "and placed an old mastiff over me,"— a pretty mastiff indeed!—"because I won't marry the tutor. But I am a girl of such pride, such spirit, such fortitude, Mr. Howard," (*the report of a pistol is heard*) What's that? a pistol at this time of night, and so near me! Lord! it's very alarming. Who can it be? Oh, it's the poachers firing at the game. Psha, what a fool I was. Hem, (*sits and*

writes) "I am a girl of such pride, such spirit, such forti—" (*noise of forcing open a door*) Well, (*noise again*) somebody's forcing the door! he's coming! the baron's coming. (*noise again*) Oh, dear, I'll run away. (*tries to open the door Deborah went out at, but finds it fastened*) Oh, she has locked me in: Deborah, Deborah! (*runs and hides herself behind the bed*)

(*the door is burst open, and* MANDEVILLE *enters with a pistol in his hand*)

Mand. Life isn't worth the struggle. Howard hadn't left me an hour amongst the ruins of the castle, when Realize and his followers came up with me. I remonstrated in vain. They seized me; and seeing no other mode of extricating myself, I fired my pistol in the air, and the cowards vanished. Here perhaps I may rest in safety. (*sits down and puts the pistol on the table*) How, a light! I thought this part of the castle had been uninhabited. Sure nobody observes me. Ha, the curtain moves. One of the villains has pursued me. Is there to be no period to their persecution. (*pulls forth Albina*) Mark me, sir, return to the agent who employed you. Begone, directly, or this pistol—

Alb. Oh, lord! Deborah, Deborah!—

Mand. No noise: begone this instant. (*Albina retires up*) Stop. Come back. You may betray me to your curst associates: therefore remain. Sit down. (*forces her into a chair*) Stir not, look not, breathe not.

Alb. I won't. Deborah, Debo—

Mand. Hush, or by heaven—Stay, sure I should know that face. Speak, do you not recollect me?

Alb. No; but I shall never forget you.

Mand. 'Tis the youth who came to the cottage. 'Tis Herbert; and no doubt is on a visit to his cousin. Curst infatuation! I'm doomed to be a torment. Sir, I've been mistaken; and know too well the pangs of apprehension to wish to inflict it on others. Pray, pray, pardon me. (*taking her hand*)

Alb. True flesh and blood, I declare. I'm better now. I may breathe again, I suppose. Ooh, ooh! (*breathing violently*) So you're not an apparition then, you're only a robber?

Mand. Robber! Sir, I *have* been—Well, well, it concerns not you; else I could tell you that the steward of this mansion, this reptile Realize, who was about to make a prisoner of me, and to whose persecution you owe my present intrusion—oh, in the lifetime of his master, the late too unsuspicious Mr. Mandeville, he would not, no, he dared not e'en have frowned upon me. But I have done, I've already been the cause of much uneasiness to you; therefore, good night.

Alb. Stay, I must hear more. Did you know Mr. Mandeville, sir?

Mand. Know him!

Alb. Why are you so agitated, sir? If you knew him, perhaps you also know his unhappy son.

Mand. I do indeed. And if I dare reveal to you—but I must not trust you, you are a friend of the governess.

Alb. I am: but I am also a friend to the unfortunate. Come, you had better trust me, I have great influence over Albina; and since you are the friend of Mr. Mandeville, I'll persuade

her to satisfy this steward—(*Mandeville shakes his head*) Nay, if you think she has not a compassionate heart, you don't know her, indeed you do not.

Mand. She ought to be compassionate. Her mother had a heart o'erflowing with benevolence, and her father—but he—he is forgotten, deserted.

Alb. Poor man: I often think of him, often shed tears over his misfortunes. Where is he? Might I behold him? (*Mandeville weeps*) Nay, if you knew all, perhaps I have more cause to weep than you have.

Mand. You cut me to the soul. I can't support it. Let me begone.

Realize. (*without*) This way, the rascal's this way.

Mand. My persecutor again: what's to be done?

Alb. Stay where you are; it's his turn now.

enter REALIZE *and two servants.*

Real. There he is; seize him, secure him, while I go for officers of justice. You'll pop at us like so many partridges, will you? (*servants hold Mandeville*) Keep him tight; and now I may safely say my troubles are at an end.

Alb. (*meeting him*) Rather say, your troubles are going to begin. Unhand that gentleman. Let him go, I insist. (*servants leave Mandeville*) And now, Mr. steward, a word in private, if you please. (*Mandeville retires up*) You recollect me?

Real. To be sure I do.

Alb. Then hear me, sir, I'll pay what he owes.

Real. You pay!

Alb. Yes, I'll pay. Can't you understand me? Go, sir; and for the future don't disgrace your employers by acts of cruelty and oppression. Why ar'n't you gone?

Real. Um! before I obey the young lady, I must have orders from the old one. You'll excuse me; but you're not your own mistress, you know, my dear.

Alb. No. But I'm yours, you know, my dear.

Real. You're not. The governess is my mistress. Pooh, you've no will of your own.

Alb. No, but I've a will of my grandfather's; and if you don't instantly release this gentleman, I'll discharge you from being my steward, my steward, do you hear that, sir? What does he owe?

Real. Why, he owes me and Sir Solomon above fourteen hundred pounds; and do you think either of us will be content with the security of a minor? No, no, we'll have the money down.

Alb. So you shall. Take it.

Real. Take it! Where?

Alb. Out of my grandfather's money.

Real. Pshaw, he didn't leave so much cash behind him.

Alb. Didn't he? then he left houses, lands, and woods. So go, sir, go cut down a wood directly.

Real. Cut down a wood!

Alb. Ay, sir, and if that won't raise the sum, cut down another, and another. It will improve the prospect, and gratify Albina with the finest view in the world, that of seeing an unfortu-

nate man made happy. (*turning to Mandeville and taking his hand*)

Real. Here's a promising young heiress. Without the aid of a fashionable husband, she'll lay waste more wood in an hour than her grandfather planted in his life-time.

Alb. What, not gone yet? I'm out of all patience. (*takes up the pistol*) Go, sir. Begin lopping and chopping with your own hands, or this pistol—

Real. What a devil it is! Come, William, come, Gregory, we'll go and send the governess.

Alb. What's that you say, sir? Mind me, if you repeat one syllable of what has passed, this pistol shall prove more fatal to you than the Pontine marshes. It shall make as large a hole in your lungs as the Bristol waters have in your pocket. Go, dotard, quick, quick. (*follows Realize and servants to the door with the pistol, and forces them out*) So, between swords and pistols I've had a pretty hot day of it.

Mand. How am I to thank you, sir? Till now I had but one friend, one only friend; and he in poverty has proved so generous. Oh, if you knew—

Alb. I wish I did know him, sir. Whoever he is, if he has been kind to you, I'm sure I shall esteem him. Come, though you won't mention your own name, you may trust me with his. Who is your friend?

Mand. Howard.

Alb. Howard! has he, has Mr. Howard been kind to you?

Mand. He has been my companion, my benefactor. He has displeased his family to assist me; and, what afflicts me more than all, on my

account, I fear, he has offended the lady he most loves.

Alb. Indeed! And pray, who—not that it's any affair of mine, but pray, who is the lady he most loves?

Mand. Who should it be but Albina? His hand, his heart, his life is at her disposal.

Alb. His life! she mustn't let him die then. Tell him so, Mr.——Dear! I wish I knew your name. You say you are the friend of Mr. Mandeville, the friend of Mr. Howard; can't you confide in me? (*noise of unlocking the door*) Somebody's coming. The steward has betrayed us. What shall we do? I'll stand before and hide you. (*places herself before Mandeville*)

enter DEBORAH.

Well, Deborah, what do you want?

Deb. The steward has been with Mrs. Rigid. She is suddenly taken ill; and desires I'll bring you to her own room directly. Why, what's that? somebody is behind you.

Alb. Hush, it's the baron.

Deb. The baron!

Alb. Don't be frightened. He speaks highly of you; and though I told him it was impossible, he swears he'll make an angel of you.

Deb. Don't, pray don't let him.

Alb. Well, he sha'n't, he sha'n't make an angel of you. Turn your back, and I'll lay him. (*Deborah turns round*) You see I must leave you at present. (*to Mandeville*) But as I cannot rest till I know more of your story, don't leave the castle, I entreat you. Go into that room; and, that nobody may molest you, allow me to

lock you in: and, when I return—will you trust me when I return?

Mand. Most readily.

Alb. Good night. Nay, what have you to thank me for? Realize meant to make you his prisoner; and now I've made you mine, that's all the difference. Adieu. (*Mandeville shakes hands with her, and exit at the door; Albina locks the door and puts the key in her pocket*) Deborah, he's gone, Deborah! (*hitting Deborah on the back; who trembles violently*)

Deb. Is he! Which way did he go?

Alb. Through the key-hole; and now we'll go too. Poor gentleman! I'll return to him as soon as I can; for I feel interested for him beyond description. Lead on, I'll follow thee! And oh, Mr. Howard, my dear Mr. Howard, your friendship for him, and love for me, prove you to be a man of such taste and discrimination, that, if you don't forgive me, and make me your wife, why I'll live and die—a bachelor. [*exeunt*

ACT V.

SCENE I—*a garden.*

enter ALBINA *in her own dress.*

Alb. I can neither sit, stand, nor walk. I can only bite my fingers, beat the devil's tattoo, and sing broken stanzas of despairing songs. "Ah, well-a-day, Ah, lack-a-day!" Dear, now I only ask if my governess oughtn't to be ashamed of herself? Without giving any reason, she has ordered me

to pack up, to set out for Dover, and leave the castle and Mr. Howard for ever. I begin to hate her, that's what I do. Sir Solomon too, I hate him: I hate all old people. I wish they'd go to heaven, and leave us young ones to manage the world by ourselves.

enter DEBORAH.

Deb. Miss, miss, the carriage is at the door, the postillions are mounting, the horses are prancing, and Mrs. Rigid is out of all patience.

Alb. Well, I'm coming. Deborah, what is the reason—nay, don't turn your back upon me, don't take me for the baron, Deborah. Why are we to leave the castle so unexpectedly?

Deb. I don't know: but I believe it's all owing to what the steward told her. Come, be quick. See now, here's Sir Solomon come to fetch you.

enter SIR SOLOMON, *a letter in his hand.*

Alb. Sir Solomon, I know what you're come for. You mean to force me away from the castle.

Sir. Sol. I force you!

Alb. I never disobeyed my governess in all my life, but now—

Sir Sol. 'Tis high time to begin, I think. Go, madam, (*to Deb.*) tell Mrs. Rigid, Albina sha'n't go to Dover.

Alb. Not go to Dover?

Sir Sol. No. You sha'n't stir from your own house; or, if you do, it shall only be to mine.

Alb. What, will you stand up for me, Sir Solomon?

Sir Sol. To be sure I will. This letter has opened my eyes, it proves the governess to be

the worst of hypocrites; and therefore from this hour you shall be your own mistress.

Alb. School's up! school's up!

Sir Sol. Why arn't you gone, Madam? Do you think I'm not fit to be her champion? Odsheart! though I'm not able to manage young women, I'll show you and your mistress I can be a match for old ones.

Alb. I'm my own governess now!—go, get along, Deborah!—[*pushes her out*]—oh, Sir Solomon! if you were my grandfather, I could not be more grateful.

Sir Sol. Read, read that letter!—I'm sorry to damp your joy, Albina.

Alb. What, does it bring bad news?

Sir Sol. The worst in the world.—read, read! 'tis written by Veritas.

Alb. (*reads*) "Sir, I am so thorough a penitent, that I cannot be happy till I have made a full confession of my bad intentions towards Miss Albina Mandeville. The truth is, I bound myself in an agreement with the governess to give her half the Mandeville estate on the day of my marriage. And here, sir, here was the cause of the much-wronged Mr. Mandeville's ruin. To obtain this property, Mrs. Rigid gave out that he remitted no money for the support of his child, though to my knowledge she received a hundred and fifty pounds half-yearly."——Sir Solomon!

Sir Sol. Go on.

Alb. (*reads*) "This story so convinced the late Mr. Mandeville of his son's inhumanity, that he died disinheriting him, and Albina lives to neglect the best of parents." (*drops the letter*) I can't read any more; oh, my poor father!

Sir Sol. You have for your excuse youth and inexperience, but I to be such a dupe.

Alb. Where is he? where is my father?

Sir Sol. There again, there's another bad business: he's nowhere to be found. Even Howard knows nothing of him; for I met him just now half distracted, saying Mandeville had gone from the place where he left him, and, pursued by his enemies, had fled either to London or the continent. He called me a savage, you another.

Alb. And well he might. Let's go after him; we'll search the world over but we'll find him; come, we'll hire all the horses, servants, and carriages in the county: we'll fly, we'll—aw, aw! here's the governess: do you speak to her, for I can't.

enter Mrs. RIGID.

Mrs. R. Sir Solomon, how dare you countenance my pupil in disobeying my orders? come along, Albina; be a good child, and go with your best friend. Why, what's the matter with you? what does the girl make faces at? speak, are you ill.

Alb. No. *(very loudly)*

Mrs R. Heyday, do you know whom you're talking to?

Alb. Yes. *(loudly)*

Mrs. R. Fie, fie, sir! teach a girl to insult her mother. *(to Sir Solomon)*

Alb. Fie, fie, madam! teach a girl to desert her father.

Mrs. R. What?

Sir Sol. (turning her towards him) Where are the letters Mandeville wrote from India?

Alb. (turning her towards her) Where is the money he sent for my support?

Mrs. R. Peace, you little insolent!

Sir Sol. (turning her) Where is the agreement between you and the tutor?

Alb. (turning her) Where are a parent's affections, a lover's heart?

Mrs. R. Silence, or I'll so chastise you—

Alb. You chastise me! the threats of my father or Mr. Howard would frighten me, because they're good people, and injured people; and if you had behaved well, I had been still afraid of you. But now—oh, I wish I had a rod, I'd pay you off old scores, that's what I would: come, Sir Solomon, let's leave her.

Sir Sol. Ay, let us seek out the wronged, the honest Mr Mandeville.

enter REALIZE.

Real. He's not to be found; Mandeville's not to be found; and I shall not only lose my two hundred pounds, but shall also be tricked out of my annuity; for yonder's Mr. Howard running about like a madman; and he swears, if he don't find him, he'll put an end to his existence. (*sees Albina*) Oh, ho! now we shall get information —your servant, Miss, or rather Master, Albina.

Alb. Sir!

Real. Who's governess now? Didn't I tell you last night this lady was my mistress? (*pointing to Mrs. Rigid*)

Alb. You did.

Real. And isn't she—isn't she my mistress?

Alb. If you like it. If you prefer serving her to me, I'm sure I've no objection. So I give you warning, and appoint the game-keeper your successor. Copsley shall be steward to the young lady, Mr. Realize to the old one.

Real. Copsley become steward! why governess—mistress!

Alb. Have you cut down that wood, sir?—oh, dear! that puts me in mind—I declare, Sir Solomon, I had quite forgot—there is a stranger now at the castle, who can very likely give us intelligence about my father. He told me he was his friend; and he is such a kind, tender-hearted creature; we'll go there first—come.

Mrs. R. Albina!

Real. Miss Mandeville!

Sir Sol. There, madam, read that letter; and if you wish to avoid the most exemplary punishment, look out all Mandeville's letters, and bring them to my house directly. You, also, sir, bring your keys and papers at the same time. Go this moment; and while Albina's at the castle, I'll wait your coming.

Real. Sir Solomon!

Sir Sol. No reply, sir.

Real. If I'm to lose my place, I hope I'm not to lose my money. There's Mr. Mandeville's debt, two year's salary, and a trifle due from Mr. Howard for the Bristol waters: he coughed me out of a dose of physic worth thirty pounds, sir.

Sir Sol. No trifling; begone, sir! Mrs. Rigid, you know my determination.

Alb. Stay, this is the last time I shall ever see her; and I can't bear to leave her so unhappy. Governess, though I am a much greater object of pity than you are, yet if my father will forgive you, I'm sure I will. At all events, while I have money, you shan't want; adieu.

Mrs. R. (weeping) Farewell!

Real. Psha! what signifies crying? you see I'm not affected: nothing ever excites my sensibility but the touch of a guinea; and, thanks to my stewardship and the annuity trade, I've saved enough to retire and live as a gentleman ought to do. And so, with many thanks for favours past, your servant, young lady and old gentleman. Come along, governess; I shall want a house-keeper, and since you can't be my mistress, I'll be your master. [*exit with Mrs. R.*

Sir Sol. Ah, you two hypocrites; begone! oh, Solomon, Solomon! you ought to have known that a woman was at the bottom of all this mischief. Come, I'll see you to the castle, and then—

Alb. I say, Sir Solomon, if we meet Mr. Howard by the way, I hope you won't let him kill me!

Sir Sol. Kill you! why?

Alb. I know he'll be monstrous desperate. In a good cause I've a good heart; but in a bad one, oh, lord! Deborah is a lion to me.

Sir Sol. Never fear; I'll stand by you: and to prove I can be a protector, without being a poacher, I'll not ask even a kiss, till I have delivered you safe into your father's hands; no, and then I won't trouble you unless you particularly desire it. Come, I have given all that up for life; and I shall die, as I have lived, a bachelor.

Alb. Don't, I hate bachelors; I wish there was a tax upon them.

Sir Sol. There ought; for 'tis a luxury, I promise you. [*exeunt*

SCENE II—*the Baron's chamber. Table remaining, with pistol, &c.*

enter HOWARD

How. Not here, either! nowhere to be found! what can have become of him? Veritas detained me longer than I intended; and when I returned to the ruins, Mandeville was gone; thinking, no doubt, that, like the rest of his unfeeling friends, I had forgotten and deserted him. I am the most unhappy fellow living! *(sits, his hand accidentally falls on the pistol)* What's here? a pistol! oh, heaven! he couldn't be so desperate. How! the initials of his name upon the barrel; it is too evident; he has destroyed himself, and died, suspecting Howard of ingratitude. I shall not long survive him; oh, Mandeville, Mandeville!

Mand. (within) Howard, Howard!

How. What voice is that? speak!

Mand. 'Tis I; 'tis your friend!

How. He is living! *(tries the door)* Nay, if 'twere adamant, I'd split it into atoms! *(forces it open)*

enter MANDEVILLE.

How. (embracing him) My dear fellow! the next time you kill yourself, don't leave your instrument of death behind you. The initials on this barrel make the worst *memento mori* I ever read.

Mand. Kill myself! how you misconceive, my friend; I took refuge here to avoid Realize; and meeting young Herbert, he protected me, and locked me in that apartment.

How. Did he? did Bobadil protect you?

Mand. He was most kind to me; and promised to make Albina kind to me. I wonder he's not returned: 'tis a long time since he left me.

How. Oh, he has a very slippery memory; the young coxcomb promised to make Albina kind to me; and I've never seen nor heard of him since. However, to show you how very likely he is to keep his word with either of us, Albina by this time has left the castle, and gone to Dover.

Mand. Gone to Dover!

How. I saw the carriage at the door an hour ago. 'Sdeath! it's only lost time to think of her or Herbert! so, let us go to London—let us escape while we can.

Mand. Well, be it so. 'Tis plain I am forgotten; and therefore I, like Albina, will bid adieu to the castle for ever. And while she hurries to scenes of gaiety and happiness, her father shall—no, while I have your friendship, Howard, I ought, and will defy misfortune. *(noise of door opening)* We are interrupted: let us return to the chamber. *(exeunt at the door Mandeville came from)*

enter ALBINA.

Alb. Oh, dear, I'm such a coward! coming up stairs, I thought I heard Mr. Howard's voice in this room; and I dread his reproaches, and his triumph, and his anger so much, that I'd rather see the old baron himself: oh, it's all fancy! he's not here, so I may open the door, and venture to talk to my prisoner. Heigh ho!

the sight of people one has injured is so dreadful, that I do believe, if Mr. Howard—*(she opens the door)*

enter HOWARD.

Oh! h! h! *(screams, and falls in his arms)*

How. Holloa! what's the matter?

Alb. (recovering) Nothing; I'm better now; I thought—

How. Well, what did you think?

Alb. I thought you had been the old baron; but I see—I see—*(stealing away from him by degrees)* good bye, Mr. Howard.

How. Your servant.

Alb. There! I said so: I knew he'd be desperate. Good bye, sir; I'm going; don't you see I'm going?

How. Going! why ar'n't you gone?

Alb. So I am; I am gone. Nay, you needn't be quite in such a hurry, sir.

How. I am in a hurry! I can't waste my time on dolls and kickshaws. *(turns his back to her)*

Alb. Oh, I was sure this would be the case! what shall I do? I've a great mind to take courage—to summon up all my resolution, and go boldly within ten yards of him. *(she advances. Howard turns and frowns at her; she is frightened, and stops. He turns his back again, and she goes nearer to him)* Lord! he takes it very quietly: I'll go closer. So; I dare say if I were to touch him he wouldn't bite my head off. Mr. Howard; how d'ye do, Mr. Howard? *(pulls him round gently)*

How. Keep off! or—

Alb. Indeed I'm very sorry—I know I've behaved very ill; but it was the governess's fault,

and not mine. Pray now, forgive me: look, on my knees I entreat you; forgive me this once, and I'll be such a good, dear, darling girl! I'll be your slave—your doll—your kick—*(Howard smiles, and Albina jumps up)* Oh, he smiles! you're a good-natured creature, Howard! ha, ha! *(smiles, and looks in his face)*

How. I don't smile.

Alb. You do! you do!

How. I say I don't! and hark'ye, if I were weak enough to forgive you on my own account, how, how would you apologize for your unnatural conduct to your father?

Alb. I'll show you; look! *(takes a paper out of her pocket)*

How. What's that paper?

Alb. My grandfather's will; look! *(smiling)*

How. What! do you make a display—do you boast of your ill-gotten wealth? hear me; *(lays hold of her hand with great emotion)* The tutor has confessed—

Alb. I know it.

How. That Mr. Mandeville—that *my* friend remitted money from India—

Alb. I know it.

How. That the governess—that *your* friend concealed his letters—

Alb. I know it.

How. Then how dare you insult me with this ill-timed triumph? one word more and we part for ever: no chuckling! listen! *(taking her hand with great violence)* if your grandfather had known these facts, would he have disinherited an affectionate son, only to adopt an unfeeling daughter? would he not have destroyed that testament?

Alb. To be sure he would; and as he can't do it himself, won't I do it for him? there, and there, and there; *(tearing the will)* I'm my own mistress now; and I think I can't do greater honour to my grandfather's memory, than by destroying an instrument that he would now blush to sign, and I forever be ashamed to profit by.

How. Are you—how handsome she looks!—are you convinced?

Alb. I am: I hate my governess as much for her unceasing enmity to my father, as I envy you for your exalted friendship towards him: oh, Mr. Howard! do you think he'll ever forgive me? I'm going in search of him; but, if you should be so fortunate as to see him before me, pray tell him that things are now what they ought always to have been; he is the possessor of the Mandeville estate, and I have nothing but what results from his bounty. Farewell!

How. Stay, 'tis my turn to kneel now; *(kneels)* oh, you angel! *(rises)* Mandeville! come forth, Mandeville! there is no longer any cause for concealing yourself.

enter MANDEVILLE.

Look at her; look at Albina, your much-abused daughter! she has parted from her governess! she has torn her grandfather's will! she has—damn it! why don't you speak to her? joy choaks me! I'm dumb.

Mand. *(embracing her)* My child, my child!

Alb. My father!

Mand. Have I at length a recompense? oh, Howard! did I not say the time would come—

How. Why will you speak to me, when you know I can't answer you?

Alb. Will you forgive me, sir? can you forget—

Mand. Forget! I never blamed you. And at this moment your mother's virtues shine out so brightly in your conduct, that I could wish that will were still in force. I want not now my father's wealth to make me happy; my child, my long-lost daughter is restored to me, and I am blest, and rich beyond my hopes.

enter SIR SOLOMON, COPSLEY, *and* CICELY.

Sir Sol. Come, Albina, 'tis time to proceed on our journey. What, Mandeville! Howard! all together! all reconciled! tol de rol lol!

How. So you're come to play the governor.

Sir Sol. Not I. I've been as great a fool as any of you. I thought Mrs. Rigid a divinity; but I've found out she's a woman: Veritas has converted me. I'm a fair penitent now, Howard. Mandeville, you have deserved better treatment; give me your hand; George, give me yours: and now, my little fellow-traveller, give me the kiss we talked of; no, hang it, 'twill be only distressing you.

How. Nay, Sir Solomon, if it will give you any pleasure, I'm sure it will give me no pain.

Sir Sol. Arch rogue! now, I'll take it by proxy, on purpose to be revenged. There, George, try how you can bear it. *(Howard kisses Albina)* So, does it give you much pain? well, what say you, Mr. Mandeville? how shall we punish these two culprits? shall we inflict matrimony, or separation?

How. Oh, matrimony, by all means! don't you think so, sir? (*to Mandeville*)

Mand. I do indeed. The day that gives Albina such a husband, and makes me father of such a son as Howard, must be the proudest and happiest of my life.

Sir Sol. Say you so? then take her, George, and if the marriage state can afford happiness ——however, we won't talk of impossibilities.

How. Now, Albina, will you ever talk of Cicely again?

Alb. Will you ever call me Becky again?

How. Becky!

Alb. If you do, I'll make you a companion to the wild goose in the cottage. "I hope your lungs are better, sir?" *(reminding him by her voice and attitude)*

How. What! were you Bobadil? were you the little smart, well-made lieutenant?

Alb. I was young Herbert, sir; and I bless the disguise, not only for convincing me of the sincerity of my lover, but also for introducing me to my father. I hope you don't blame me, sir? *(to Mandeville)*

Sir Sol. He blame you! no: Howard has most reason. What will your husband say to your strutting about in boy's clothes?

How. Say! that I wish all women would wear the breeches before marriage, instead of afterwards.

Cops. Oh, madam, how shall I thank you? you have saved me and my family from ruin.

Cic. You have, madam; and we are all gratitude.

Alb. This is your benefactor; you are to thank my father, not me. If you wish to do me a favour, why there is one——

Cic. Oh, name it, madam; name it!

Alb. Why, it rather concerns Sir Solomon than myself. Pray be kind enough to have the old curtain repaired, lest he should again wish to take cover behind it. And likewise, do send me some of the straw: I mean to be married in a straw hat, and I'll have one manufactured out of Sir Solomon's stubble.

How. One! we'll have a dozen; and our children shall wear them, in honour of their great-uncle's gallantry!

Sir Sol. Gallantry! psha! I've something better to think of than women.

How. Indeed you have not. Come, come, uncle, rail at the sex as much as you like, you must confess that life is a blank without them; and the gaming-table, the bottle, and the sports of the field, are all so many substitutes—shadows; woman is the true substance, after all; and, compared to her, all other objects are as the glow-worm to the sun: it may dazzle the sight, but it can never warm the heart! don't you think so, Albina?

Alb. I do indeed. Women are certainly most superior creatures; and, if by accident they have any faults, men ought not to see them—at least, I hope that will be my case to-night. I have done and talked a great many foolish things: but having their hands and full pardon, (*standing between Mandeville and Howard*) let me have yours, and Albina will be the happiest of wives, and the most grateful of daughters.

END OF THE WILL.

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